

Walford Nursery and Primary School - Chair of Governors Impact Statement
- Board of Governors Meeting - Wednesday 2nd December 2020 - Paul Deneen

1. Introduction - Governors meeting was via Zoom.

As you will be aware the situation nationally and the pandemic/Covid 19, still remains unprecedented. At Walford, this autumn term has been a very busy one. Bearing in mind the circumstances, the school has functioned as normal as was possible. Louise George, as Headteacher, has briefed us fully on all key areas of activity at the recent full governors meeting. I have summarised key messages within this report.

2. Visits to the school

As chair of the governing board, I visited the school twice during this half term. I also held meetings with the Headteacher (HT) and Deputy Headteacher (DHT) via zoom. I was incredibly impressed with how the pupils and staff were operating at this difficult time. There was a superb atmosphere, and the children were engaged and were working to the best of their ability. Activities were also arranged and organised for the pupils, as a number of the usual visits and performances, particularly at Christmas time were postponed this year as a result of the pandemic. I have also been incredibly impressed at the way the nursery has blossomed over the past few months. It has become popular with parents/carers and long may this continue!

3. Review of key areas of activity

The governors had a very busy schedule of meetings in the latter part of the term. This included:-

a) A small group of governors met with the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher to review the **SEND/Special Educational Needs** arrangements, and to review the work undertaken by the school. A report followed which was both informative and positive in relation to the support offered to individual pupils.

b) Similarly a review was also undertaken of **pupil premium**. The school receives additional funding to support individual pupils who have been identified for this funding. All of the funds were reviewed, and it was felt that the school had an excellent record in supporting those in need. In particular, the funding is available to improve pupil performance. The school was able to clearly evidence the 'added value' of the support work undertaken, and this was excellent.

c) Governors had set up a 'task and finish' working party who also took the opportunity to review the **health, safety, premises, cyber security and the updated Covid 19 risk assessment**. Governors were impressed with the work of the school, and all agreed actions were in place or would be actioned, as part of the relevant policies.

d) **Safeguarding/GDPR** and the school policy, together with the training of governors on safeguarding, was also actioned regarding this very important work.

4. There was an **update from each of the chairs of the committees**, and there were no issues of concern raised. A **summary** of the update is as follows:-

a) Standards, Teaching and Learning Committee

A meeting had been held in the latter part of the term. Key areas of work in relation to reading, writing and maths for all pupils was considered. Actions were in place to seek to improve pupil performance of all pupils. There had also been some very creative and innovative work undertaken. Guest speakers had been invited in or utilised virtual

working. Additional support for the PE equipment was now in place as well, which had been very well received by pupils and by staff. The governors would review pupil performance in March, and had invited the School Improvement Adviser, Sarah Somers to provide a briefing to governors. Sarah has been excellent in her advice to the school over many years. Her role as an Ofsted Inspector was also very helpful and useful in relation to being updated on national developments.

b) Pupils, Personnel and Community Committee

Governors were advised that there were no major issues in relation to staffing/personnel. There had been some changes earlier in the term, and all governors had been informed of these changes. There was a new Nursery Manager with Sarah Hyde, who was excited and came to the new post with a wealth of experience. The committee had also reviewed the teacher performance, and had received a most positive report from the HT. A new part time SENCo had been appointed. All other posts including teaching and support staff were all ready to be finalised/implemented. The school had a very good link with Hoople HR, and were able to 'buy in' arrangements via their support staffing, which has been helpful.

c) School Business Committee

The overall budget remains in a healthy position. There were no issues of concern raised. The nursery provision and its budget and provision was discussed at length. The committee were very grateful to the HT/DHT and School Business Manager for their excellent work regarding getting this important project off the ground. There was discussion on the refurbishment at the school. Lots of very positive comments were made about the improvements. The costs to the school regarding Covid 19, and possible recovery of costs from the Department for Education was an issue raised by members, and this would be followed up at a later stage..

5. Parent, Teacher and Friends Association

Governors wished to place on record its thanks to the PTFA for the fund raising. The wreath making had been most successful. All pupils enjoyed a free Christmas dinner, and a free reading book as a Christmas present. All were very well received. In addition, a circus skills performer/performance was arranged and was viewed and enjoyed by the pupils/staff.

6. The school website - update on governance

This had been updated to include the information on all of the governors including the two new governors - Victoria Darrington and Neil Vanstone. Both bring a wealth of experience and useful skills to the team of governors.

7. Training and development of governors

There were ongoing opportunities to undertake virtual training via the National Governance Association, as well as with local providers. The National Governance magazine also provides an update on all national developments.

Huge thanks.....

The Chair wished to place on record the governor's thanks to the Headteacher and the team at Walford for its outstanding work this term, which had been much appreciated! Very well done to all staff and 'Team Walford.'

The Chair thanked the governors and the Clerk for all their superb support, and their valuable contribution at this very difficult time. The PTFA and the parents/carers had been incredibly supportive of the school as well, and this again was much appreciated. The pupils continued to work their very best, and were supported in relation to 'Every child, Every opportunity, Every day.' These have been difficult and unprecedented times, and everyone had tried their utmost to support all!

Thank you for taking the time to read this and to wish you all a very happy new year! Take care, stay safe!

Best wishes - Paul Deneen - Chair of the Board of Governors - December 2020.